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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WARSAW 001975

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SUBJECT: POLAND AND NORDSTREAM TALKING PAST EACH OTHER

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Classified By: Econ Counselor Richard Rorvig, reasons 1.4 b, d

¶1. (C) Summary: Polish interlocutors continue to tell post that they oppose the construction of the proposed Nordstream gas pipeline from Russia to Germany. They complain that the Nordstream company announces information to the press rather than discussing it with the Ministry of Economy. Opposition to the pipeline cuts across party politics and would not change with a change in government. End Summary.

GOP Continues to Oppose Nordstream

¶2. (C) Jakub Kozera and Janusz Kowalski of the Ministry of Economy's Department for Diversification of Oil and Gas Supply told EconOff that the GOP continues to oppose the construction of the Nordstream (NEGP) gas pipeline from Russia to Germany. The official GOP position is as follows: "Poland has no interest in participation in the NEGP project. Furthermore, Poland considers the project as opposing our interest and the general rule of European solidarity."

But the GOP and the Company aren't Talking

¶3. (C) Deputy Minister of Economy Naimski sent a letter to the Nordstream consortium in July requesting further details on the project and detailing Polish concerns about the proposed construction and route. To date, Kowalski said that Naimski has not received a response to his request. Kozera noted that the company has often announced that it has discussed the project with the Ministry or sent it a letter or information about the project before the letter is actually sent to the Ministry.

What the GOP Wants to Know

¶4. (C) In Naimski's letter, the GOP requested that Nordstream provide the GOP the following information:
-- An analysis and specification of three alternative routes

for the pipeline, including a zero option in which the pipeline would not be constructed;
-- Information on the conformity of the project with the energy and environmental policy of the EU;
-- Detailed specifications on the entire project's infrastructure;
-- An inventory of documentation of chemical weapons and chemical substations on the Baltic seabed in the neighborhood of the planned pipeline;
-- An analysis of the influence of the project on Baltic flora and fauna, especially birds and marine mammals;
-- An analysis of the possibility of breakdowns and the resulting impact on the environment.

Discussions at Espoo Convention Meeting

15. (C) Kozera explained that during an August 21 and 22 meeting of the Espoo Convention (Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context) parties in Berlin, the Nordstream consortium informed the parties that it plans to change the route of the pipeline - within the limits of the Finnish Gulf (although the Consortium at that time had not finalized the decision on the final routing), in the south zone of the Gotland shelf (the Hoburg shoal), and the Bornholm Island area. The company also noted that the changes to the routing near Bornholm will impact the entry point into the German system. Kowalski emphasized that this information is inconsistent with the presentation of the project to the GOP by the company. During the Espoo meeting Estonia also informed the parties that the consortium requested it be able to perform research in Estonian territorial waters - to date, the GOP does not have information on the GOE's final decision, which must be made by the end of September. Kozera added that the next Espoo meeting will be in October and that the GOP hopes to gain

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more information on the project then. Both Kozera and Kowalski believe that Estonia will agree to let the consortium conduct its studies because of the strong Russian influence in the country's energy sector. (Comment: This belief appears to be based on anti-Russian sentiment common in GOP officials rather than in actual discussions with Estonian officials. End Comment.)

Opposition Crosses Party Lines

16. (C) A recent conversation with Senator Urszula Gacek, Civic Platform (PO) Senator confirmed that opposition to the Nord Stream pipeline crosses party lines. Gacek has spoken in opposition to the pipeline in the European Parliament and at energy conferences in Poland and Germany. She underscored that PO will continue to oppose the pipeline project, not for reasons of anti-German or anti-Russian sentiment, but because the project undermines Polish energy security by bypassing the country.

17. (C) Comment: As the Nordstream project continues to advance, we can expect that the GOP will oppose it in any way possible - by opposing financing, speaking against the project in international fora, and using environmental laws and regulations to slow or stop the project. This opposition crossing party lines and will not dissipate with a possible change in government as ensuring Poland's energy security is a goal all parties share.

HILLAS